

## CHAPTER 78. APPROVE A CHECK AIRMAN FOR 14 CFR PART 125 OPERATIONS (PILOT, FLIGHT ENGINEER, OR NAVIGATOR)

### SECTION 1. BACKGROUND

#### 1. PROGRAM TRACKING AND RECORDING SUBSYSTEM ACTIVITY CODE: 1350

- Pilot: 1346
- Flight Engineer: 1347
- Navigator: 1348
- Oceanic Navigator: 1349

**2. OBJECTIVE.** The objective of this task is to determine if an applicant is eligible for check airman authority. Successful completion of this task results in the issuance of a letter of authorization to the applicant or operator giving an individual check airman authority or results in denial of check airman authority.

#### 3. GENERAL.

*A. Certification Applicant or Existing Operator.* A check airman authorization may be issued to an applicant for a Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 125 certificate or an existing 14 CFR part 125 operator. Although an individual is assigned check airman duties to conduct initial, recurrent, and instrument checks required by 14 CFR §§ 125.265(b), 125.285, 125.287, and 125.291, the authorization is issued to the applicant or operator.

*B. Letter of Request.* Requests for approval of a check airman (including check airmen for flight engineers, if necessary) should be submitted in letter form (figure 78-1) by the operator to the certificate-holding district office. Each request received by the district office is reviewed by the principal operations inspector to determine the need for a check airman, based on factors such as the complexity of the operation (number of aircraft and flight personnel) and the qualifications of the nominee, before scheduling any tests.

*C. Instruction.* Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspectors will instruct the check airman in the proper conduct of practical tests and in the completion and disposition of an airman applicant's file.

**4. ASSESSING CHECK AIRMAN QUALIFICATIONS.** When evaluating the qualifications of a check airman nominee, the inspector has to determine the nominee's currency.

*A. Other Proficiency Checks.* The inspector may accept proficiency checks conducted under 14 CFR § 121.441 to establish qualifications for the check airman nominee. Furthermore, the successful completion of a proficiency check under either 14 CFR part 121 or 14 CFR part 125 satisfies the requirements of 14 CFR § 61.58.

*B. Conditions for Accepting 14 CFR Part 121 Proficiency Checks.* A pilot proficiency check conducted in accordance with appendix F of 14 CFR part 121 may be accepted as meeting the requirements for operations conducted under 14 CFR part 125 if:

(1) The check is conducted in the same type of airplane or in an airplane simulator or other training device, approved under 14 CFR § 121.407 for each flight maneuver or procedure to be accomplished during the proficiency check.

(2) The pilot has passed a written or oral test on the appropriate provisions of 14 CFR parts 61, 91, and 125, and the operations specifications and manual of the certificate holder (14 CFR § 125.287(a)(1)).

(3) A properly documented record of that crew-member is maintained in accordance with the requirements of 14 CFR § 125.401.

**5. CONDUCT OF THE EVALUATION FLIGHT.** The Principal Operations Inspector (POI) is responsible for the authorization/denial of check airmen. The POI may perform all of the procedures or may assign a qualified inspector to conduct the practical test.

*A. Inspector Responsibility During the Test.* The evaluation flight of a check airman nominee is considered to be a practical test of the nominee's ability to test other airmen. However, since the nominee is not yet authorized as a check airman, the FAA inspector is actually conducting a dual test: on the check airman nominee and on the airman being tested. This situation should be discussed and explained to all participants before the flight. It is similar to the situation where an

inspector observed a pilot examiner nominee conducting a practical test. (Refer to Related Task in chapter 15, Designate/Renew a General Aviation Pilot Examiner.)

*B. Simulated Emergencies.* Before beginning the flight test discuss with the nominee the method in which simulated emergencies will be created and agree on the method to be used to preclude an actual emergency. If an actual emergency occurs, the test is terminated immediately and attention focused on crew coordination and operation of the airplane to the extent necessary to handle the situation.

*C. Post-Flight Critique.* After the flight evaluation, the FAA inspector and the check airman nominee must confer before advising the airman being tested of the results of the test. This is a continuation of the evaluation of the check airman nominee. The nominee indicates whether the other airman's performance was satisfactory or unsatisfactory and the justification for the decision. The inspector indicates agreement or disagreement and why, then decides whether to pass or fail the check airman nominee and the airman being tested. The procedures for handling the various pass/fail situations are in section 2, following.

## **6. SINGLE LONG-RANGE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM (SLRCS) AUTHORIZATION.**

A. Sections 121.351(c), 125.203(e), and 135.165(d) now allow the Administrator to authorize SLRCS under certain conditions. Annex 6, part 1, chapter 7, of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices, does not require redundant communications systems, only the capability to, "communicate at any time in flight, receive meteorological information, and conduct two-way communications for aerodrome control purposes."

*B.* Guidance in paragraph 6 incorporated into Advisory Circular (AC) 91-70, Oceanic Operations, An Authoritative Guide to Oceanic Operations, aviation safety inspectors (ASI) issuing OpSpecs authorizing SLRCS shall use this guidance to evaluate an operator's request for SLRCS in oceanic airspace as follows:

(1) All part 125 operations must be conducted in accordance with 14 CFR § 125.203(e). Each airplane equipped with only one operating high frequency (HF) or satellite link communication system must be capable of monitoring and communicating with air traffic control (ATC) during the flight segment when the airplane is operated beyond the range of

ground-based very high frequency (VHF) radio communications equipment.

(2) Prior to commencing operations in the extended over water area approved in OpSpecs paragraph B045, the carrier shall enter into, and obtain letters of agreement from the appropriate oceanic control areas. Copies of these letters should be maintained by the FAA in the OpSpecs correspondence file.

(3) All flights in oceanic airspace conducted with a single functional Long-Range Communication System, over any airway or other approved route, should not normally exceed a two-way VHF communications gap of 30 minutes when operating at the aircraft's normal en route altitude.

(4) A request for authorization to operate over a portion of a route that exceeds a 30-minute VHF communications gap may be submitted to the Administrator if the oceanic control center agrees by letter. The certificate holder may request approval for a non standard OpSpec B045, in accordance with HBAT 98-06, Procedures for Request of Nonstandard Operations Specifications, that meets the requirements of 14 CFR section 121.351(c), 125.203(e), or 135.165(d), as applicable. The non standard OpSpec, B045, must be requested from the Administrator through the Air Transportation Division, AFS-200 or the General Aviation and Commercial Division, AFS-800, as appropriate.

## **7. CERTIFICATE HOLDERS' MANUALS.**

A. If the operations are conducted under 14 CFR part 125 using this OpSpec paragraph, B045, each certificate holder's manual shall contain procedures that ensure that the additional requirements of OpSpecs paragraph B045, subparagraph e are met.

*B.* The certificate holder's manual shall contain procedures to ensure that the pilot-in-command (PIC) satisfactory completes a functional check of the SLRCS prior to entering oceanic airspace.

*C.* Part 125 initial and recurrent pilot testing programs should be updated with applicable information from these paragraphs.

*D.* The MEL should be reviewed to ensure that the deferral of communications equipment does not conflict with this authorization.

*E.* Remove any expired exemptions from A005 of the OpSpecs, or any that are superseded by OpSpecs B045.

## SECTION 2. PROCEDURES

### 1. PREREQUISITES AND COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS

*A. Prerequisites.* This task requires knowledge of regulatory requirements in 14 CFR part 125, FAA policies, and, specifically —

- Check Airman authorization process
- Task background
- Qualification as an Aviation Safety Inspector (Operations)

*B. Coordination.* This task requires coordination with the principal operations inspector, the operations unit supervisor, and, possibly, the airworthiness unit.

### 2. REFERENCES, FORMS, AND JOB AIDS

#### *A. References.*

- Title 14 CFR parts 1, 61, and 91
- Order 8700.1, volume 2, chapter 1, Introduction to Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 61 Related Tasks
- Order 8700.1, volume 2, chapter 15, Designate a General Aviation Pilot Examiner

#### *B. Forms*

- FAA Form 8000-36, PTRS Transmittal Form
- FAA Form 8410-1, Airman Proficiency/Qualification Check (for use by the check airman applicant)

#### *C. Job Aids*

- Sample letters and figures
- FAA Form 8410-1, Airman Proficiency/Qualification Check (for optional use by the inspector to check the testing activities of the check airman applicant)

### 3. PROCEDURES.

*A. Review Letter of Request.* Review the applicant's letter of request for Check Airman authorization to determine if there is a need for a Check Airman. Base your decision on the following:

- Number of airplanes and flight crewmembers
- Complexity of operations
- The nominee's qualifications

(1) If you determine that the company does not need a Check Airman issue a letter of denial. (See figure 78-2.)

(2) If you determine there is a need for a check airman, review the nominee's qualifications.

*B. Review the Nominee's Qualifications.* Ensure that the nominee meets the following applicable requirements by using the Airman Information Directory System (AIDS) and the Enforcement Information System (EIS) and by reviewing the supporting information included with the letter of request. The nominee must meet and maintain the following qualifications:

(1) For a pilot check airman --

(a) An airman certificate with category, class, ratings, and type ratings appropriate for the airplane in which tests will take place.

(b) A medical certificate appropriate for the category of airman certificate.

(c) The pilot-in-command requirements of 14 CFR § 125.281.

(d) The recency of experience requirements of 14 CFR § 125.285.

(e) The initial and recurrent pilot testing requirements of 14 CFR § 125.287.

(f) The pilot-in-command requirements of 14 CFR § 125.291 for IFR flight.

(g) The ability to evaluate another pilot's technique and proficiency properly. This can be determined by a history as a check pilot for another operator, as a certificated flight instructor, as a pilot examiner, etc.

(h) Qualifications, knowledge, and experience which commands respect and confidence.

(i) Good record as a pilot; good reputation in the industry and the local aviation community for honesty and dependability.

(2) For a flight engineer check airman —

(a) An airman certificate with category, class, ratings, and type ratings appropriate for the airplane in which tests will take place.

(b) A medical certificate appropriate for the category of airman certificate

(c) Meet the experience requirements of 14 CFR § 125.265

(d) The recency of experience requirements of 14 CFR § 125.285

(e) The initial and recurrent pilot testing requirements of 14 CFR § 125.287

(3) If the nominee does not meet the above qualifications, issue a letter of denial to the company. (See figure 78-3.)

(4) If the nominee is qualified, schedule the evaluation flight.

*C. Schedule the Evaluation Flight.* Determine the date, time, and place of the evaluation flight based on inspector availability and workload.

*D. Before The Evaluation Flight.* Before conducting the actual evaluation flight, determine that the nominee is knowledgeable on the following:

- Title 14 CFR parts 61, 63, 91, and 125
- Appropriate practical test standards
- Operations Specifications
- Relevant portions of the policies and procedures manual
- Techniques associated with administering a particular practical test
- The procedures and limitations for performing normal, abnormal, and emergency maneuvers
- The appropriate action to be taken when acceptable standards have not been met
- How to fill out FAA Form 8410-1, Airman Proficiency/Competency Check

(1) If the nominee does not show adequate knowledge of the above, then issue a letter of denial. (See figure 78-3.)

(2) If the nominee has adequate knowledge of the above, conduct the evaluation flight.

*E. Observe the Nominee Conducting the Oral Portion of a Test or Check of a Company Airman.*

*F. Evaluate the Nominee's Conduct of the Oral Portion of the Test or Check.* Consider the following items when evaluating the nominee's oral test.

(1) Did the oral test include the items listed in 14 CFR § 125.287(a)?

(2) Did the nominee properly evaluate the results of the pilot's oral examination?

*G. Oral Portion of Test Unsuccessfully Administered.* If the nominee did not successfully administer the oral portion of the test or check:

(1) Advise the nominee of the failure.

(2) Recommend that nominee be denied check airman authority by entering results onto PTRS transmittal form.

(3) Route the PTRS transmittal form to the Principal Operations Inspector.

(4) Recommend that the POI issue a letter of denial to company. (See figure 78-3.)

*H. Oral Portion of Test Successfully Administered.* If the nominee successfully administered the oral examination, continue with the flight portion of the evaluation.

*I. Observe the Nominee Conduct a Required Test or Check and the Post-Flight Debriefing.*

*J. Evaluate the Nominee's Performance.* Consider the following items when evaluating the nominee's conduct of the flight test and the debriefing:

(1) For a pilot check airman nominee:

(a) Did the flight test include a competency check of the maneuvers and procedures currently required for the issuance of a commercial pilot certificate with instrument rating as required by 14 CFR §§ 61.127(a) and 61.65 (g)? (Refer to 14 CFR § 125.287(b) and use FAA Form 8410-1 as a job aid)

(b) Was the flight test conducted in an efficient and logical sequence?

(c) Was the flight test conducted safely?

(d) Did the debriefing reflect the actual performance of the pilot?

(e) Did the nominee properly evaluate the results of the pilot's flight test?

(2) For a flight engineer check airman nominee:

(a) Did the flight test satisfactorily cover the items required by 14 CFR § 63.39(b)?

(b) Was the flight test conducted in an efficient and logical sequence?

(c) Was the flight test conducted safely?

(d) Did the debriefing reflect the actual performance of the flight engineer?

(e) Did the nominee properly evaluate the results of the flight engineer's flight test?

*K. Flight Portion of the Test Unsuccessfully Administered.*

(1) If the check airman nominee did not successfully administer the flight test, but the airman being checked performed the required maneuvers and procedures successfully, then:

(a) Advise the check airman nominee of the failure.

(b) Advise the airman being checked the test is successful; make the appropriate entry on FAA Form 8410-1.

(c) Recommend that the check airman nominee be denied check airman authority by entering recommendation onto the PTRS transmittal form. List specific reasons for the denial in the recommendation.

(d) Route the PTRS transmittal form to the Principal Operations Inspector.

(e) Recommend that the POI issue a letter of denial to company. (See figure 78-3.)

(2) If both the nominee and the airman being tested performed unsuccessfully, advise both of the failures and follow steps (b) through (e) above.

*L. Flight Test Administered Successfully.*

(1) If the nominee successfully administered the flight test and the airman being tested successfully performed all required maneuvers and procedures, then:

(a) Advise the check airman nominee of the results.

(b) Advise the airman being tested of the results; make the appropriate entry on FAA Form 8410-1.

(c) Recommend that the check airman nominee be approved for check airman authority by entering recommendation onto the PTRS transmittal form.

(d) Route the PTRS transmittal form to the Principal Operations Inspector.

(e) Recommend that the POI issue a letter of authorization to the company. (See Figure 78-4.)

(2) If the nominee successfully administered the test but the airman being tested did not successfully perform all the required maneuvers and procedures, then--

(a) Advise the check airman nominee of the successful results and do (c) through (e) above.

(b) Advise the airman being tested of the failure and make the appropriate entry on FAA Form 8410-1.

(c) Recommend that the check airman nominee be approved for check airman authority by entering recommendation onto the PTRS transmittal form.

**4. TASK OUTCOMES.** Completion of this task results in one of the following:

A. Issuance of a letter of authorization to the company for check airman privileges.

B. Issuance of a letter of denial to the company.

C. Indication of satisfactory performance on FAA Form 8410-1 for the airman being checked.

D. Indication of unsatisfactory performance on FAA Form 8410-1 for the airman being checked.

**5. FUTURE ACTIVITIES.**

A. After initial authorization, observe two of the first six check flights conducted by the check airman.

B. Plan surveillance to observe the check airman at appropriate intervals depending upon the size of the operation and the number of checks accomplished.

C. Observe a minimum of one flight check conducted by each check airman during annual surveillance.

D. Possible withdrawal of the letter authorizing the check airman when--

(1) There is no longer a need for check airman services.

(2) The check airman's performance is not satisfactory.

(3) The check airman leaves the employment of the operator issued the check airman authorization.

*E.* Possible enforcement investigation if the check

airman's performance is not satisfactory.

*F.* Possible re-evaluation of the check airman, or pilots the check airman has tested, under Title 49 of the United States Code, section 609.

**FIGURE 78-1**  
**LETTER REQUESTING CHECK AIRMAN APPROVAL**

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FAA District Office

Dear Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_:

Valley Vintners, Inc. is requesting check airman authorization for one of its employees, Ms. Elizabeth Pendleton. Ms. Pendleton, if authorized, will give initial, recurrent, and instrument checks required by 14 CFR § 125.287 and 14 CFR § 125.291. Valley Vintners, Inc. operates one B-727 aircraft with two alternating crews of three.

Ms. Pendleton is holder of Airline Transport Pilot Certificate number 123456789 and has a current first class medical certificate. Furthermore, Ms. Pendleton meets the pilot-in-command instrument proficiency check requirements of 14 CFR § 125.291. Before being employed by Valley Vintner's, Inc., Ms. Pendleton was a highly regarded flight instructor and pilot examiner locally. She has no history of accidents, incidents, or violations and is considered by the local aviation community to be a competent and safe pilot.

Attached are photocopies of Ms. Pendleton's airman and medical certificates, her most recent logbook entries, and letters of recommendation. She is available at your convenience for a practical test.

Yours truly,

James T. M. Moore

**FIGURE 78-2**  
**LETTER DENYING CHECK AIRMAN REQUEST**

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FAA STATIONARY

Dear Mr. Moore:

This is in response to your recent letter requesting check airman authorization for Ms. Elizabeth Pendleton, an employee of Valley Vintner's, Inc.

After an initial review of Ms. Pendleton's record, we have determined that she meets all the necessary qualifications. However, we feel that the size of Valley Vintner's operation (two flight crews) does not warrant a check airman. The necessary initial, recurrent, and instrument checks can continue to be performed as they have been, by inspectors from this office or the air carrier under contract to provide your training.

Sincerely,

Signed by District Office Manager



**FIGURE 78-3**  
**LETTER WITHDRAWING OR DENYING CHECK AIRMAN**

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AUTHORIZATION

**EXAMPLE 1: WITHDRAWAL**

Mr. John J. Doe  
Doro Aviation Service  
Municipal Airport  
Bayside, VA 20030

Dear Mr. Doe:

A review of your personnel files during our recent surveillance of Doro Aviation Service revealed that Mr. John R. Ike is no longer employed by your company. Therefore, please be advised that the Letter of Authorization issued to Doro Aviation Service for Mr. Ike to act as a check airman is rescinded.

The Letter of Authorization must be returned to this district office as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

District Office Manager

**EXAMPLE 2: DENIAL**

Mr. James T. M. Moore  
Consultants, Inc.  
San Francisco, CA 99919

Dear Mr. Moore:

During the flight check conducted to determine Ms. Elizabeth Pendleton's qualifications for check airman authorization, Ms. Pendleton failed to demonstrate the necessary knowledge and skill for conducting instrument proficiency checks. [For any reason, state specifics.] Therefore, Valley Vintners' request for a check airman authorization for Ms. Pendleton is denied.

Contact this office at [telephone number] if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

District Office Manager

**FIGURE 78-4**  
**SAMPLE LETTER - AUTHORIZATION OF CHECK AIRMAN**

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April 10, 1987

Mr. John J. Doe  
Doro Aviation Service  
Municipal Airport  
Bayside, Virginia 20030

Dear Mr. Doe:

Mr. John R. Ike, holder of Commercial Pilot Certificate No. 356829, is approved as check airman for Doro Aviation Service. He is authorized to conduct 6-months instrument checks, initial, and recurrent (oral, written, and flight) checks for pilots to be used by Doro Aviation Service. This authorization is limited to the conduct of checks in Douglas DC-9 aircraft/simulator.

Unless sooner recalled, this letter becomes invalid if Mr. Ike's employment with Doro Aviation Service terminates. In that event, this letter must be returned to the Federal Aviation Administration Flight Standards District Office that issued the authorization. Please place a copy of this letter in Mr. Ike's individual record.

Sincerely,

Signed by District Office Manager